

Minister
of Natural Resources



Ministre
des Ressources naturelles

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0E4

Mr. Peter Watson
Chair and Chief Executive Officer
National Energy Board
517 Tenth Avenue South West
Calgary, Alberta T2R 0A8

Dear Mr. Watson:

Further to discussions with you and your staff, I am writing to seek guidance, through study and a subsequent report, on the application of “best available technologies” used in federally-regulated pipeline projects. This is an initiative that I announced in May 2014 as part of new world class pipeline safety measures, but for which no amendments to the *National Energy Board Act* are required.

The Government of Canada recognizes the need for dialogue and information on the use of best available technologies for pipelines, which take into account new innovations to continuously improve pipeline safety. I note that, with the National Energy Board’s (NEB) recently announced ‘Listening to Canadians’ tour, the NEB is well-positioned to connect and convene discussions with experts and other stakeholders with relevant expertise to help shape the study in this area.

I firmly believe that technology can and will ensure safer pipelines and protection of the environment. I also believe that guidance from the NEB regarding how companies use best available technologies and how new technologies are being developed, tested and implemented to meet demands for safer pipelines will contribute towards achieving these important goals. The study should consider the economic feasibility for companies operating pipelines to implement the technologies in the construction and operation of pipelines.

Canada

Some of the areas of focus the NEB should examine in its study and report on best available technology include:

- construction methods;
- materials;
- emergency response techniques; and,
- emerging technological developments.

It is expected that the NEB will need to consult and convene discussions with stakeholders, including industry, associations and academia, with relevant technical expertise and knowledge to develop a final study that can be disseminated broadly and contribute to the safety of pipelines and protection of the environment in Canada.

It is through subsection 26(2) of the *National Energy Board Act* that I am making this request. I would ask that the NEB undertake this study and provide the report to me by March 31, 2016. Such a timeline will provide the opportunity to consult with relevant stakeholders. As this matter falls under the Board's expected operational requirements from time to time, no additional funding will be allocated to the Board for this request.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to receiving the NEB's study with respect to the application of best available technologies in federally-regulated pipeline projects.

Sincerely,

The Honourable Greg Rickford, P.C., M.P.
Minister for Natural Resources Canada and for the
Federal Economic Development initiative for Northern Ontario